Criteria for demarcating poverty line

1403. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the criteria for declaring poor in Indian official poverty line is lowest after China in the world;

(b) if so, what is the criteria for earmarking poverty line; and

(c) the action proposed to take care of basic needs of India's poor as is being done by China?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The poverty line of countries can not usually be compared since the factors taken into account to determine the poverty line may be different for different countries.

(b) The poverty line in India is expressed in terms of per capita consumption expenditure needed to attain a minimum amount of calorie intake of food consumption along with a minimum amount of non-food expenditure in order to meet the requirements of clothing, shelter, transport etc. The per capita consumption norm has been fixed at Rs. 49.09 per month in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 per month in urban areas at 1973-74 prices at national level corresponding to a basket of goods and services, anchored on a norm of per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal. In rural area and 2400 kcal. in urban areas. The state-specific poverty line are derived from the national level poverty line, using State specific price indices and inter-state price differentials. The national poverty line at 1999-2000 prices is Rs. 327.56 per month in rural areas and Rs. 454.11 per capita per month in urban areas.

(c) The Government has adopted a three pronged strategy for reducing poverty (i) acceleration of economic growth with a focus on sectors which are employment intensive (ii) human and social development through provision of basic minimum services and (iii) targeted anti poverty programmes.

In order to take care of basic needs of India's poor at the village level, an initiative in the form of Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) was launched. The PMGY envisages Additional Central Assistance for selected basic minimum services in order to focus on certain priority areas of the

Government. These include primary health, primary education, rural shelter, drinking water, rural electrification and nutrition.

The Ministry of Rural Development also implements through the State Governments, the major schemes of the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) to provide wage and self employment to members of the rural families living below the poverty line in all the rural areas of the country. Other schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development such as the Prime Ministers Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) and the Watershed Development Programme are also designed to improve the living conditions in the rural areas as well as indirectly provide employment. Government has also recently launched a National Food for work Programme in 150 most backward Districts in the country with the objective to provide additional employment opportunities to the rural poor.

In addition, with effect from June, 1997 the Public Distribution system in India was streamlined by issuing special cards to families Below Poverty Line (BPL) and selling food grains under PDS to them specially subsidized prices which was about 50% of the economic costs. Under the new scheme *viz.* the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) each poor family is entitled to 35kgs. of foodgrains.

New guidelines for monitoring Rural Employment Scheme

1404. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are new guidelines for monitoring rural employment scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the details of district and national level committees; and

(c) the total employment generated, amount sanctioned and spent on the above scheme, State-wise, for the last three years, year-wise and category-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Monitoring of Rural Employment Schemes of the Ministry is an integral part of scheme implementation and it is a